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Park & Rec Commission Minutes 06-13-06

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, June 13, 2006

APPROVED

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00 pm on the first floor of the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, June 13, 2006.

Members in attendance included: Tom Caccavaro, Joe Carabello, Don Vitters, Nancy Campbell, Leslie Mayer, Patsy Kraemer, Heather Maietta

Public Attendance: Chuck Tirone, Tony Vogel, Andrew Leonard, Cathy Garnett, Oakes Plimpton, Cindy Curran, Liz DiNolfo, Eileen deRosas

I. Approval of May 9 meeting minutes (Approved 5-0)

1. Mr. Caccavaro-motion to approve
2. Ms. Campbell -2nd.

II. Special Events:

1. McClennen – Boy Scouts special event (Chuckwagon Derby) at McClennen Playground (Football/Soccer Field) on Sunday 9-17-06 from 8:30 am – 3:00 pm: motion to approve– Ms. Campbell, Mr. Vitters-second; Approved 5-0.
2. Robbins Farm – Request was received from the International School of Boston for a picnic at Robbins Farm. The organization said that they had run the event last year, but no one recalled this or recognized the group's name. The Commission requested clarification where was it last year, whether at Robbins Farm or another location? What are the specific events taking place during the time of the permit request? Permit was denied by the Commission at this time due to lack of information. Concern was expressed about the numbers, parking, police detail, etc. Will revisit the decision in July or via email once further information is provided by the organization requesting the event, if needed.

III. Conservation Commission

1. Chuck Tirone came before the Commission requesting a sign be hung at Spy Pond to educate boaters about preventing the spread of nuisance aquatic plants and animals. The signs are from DCR and are typically found at boat ramps around the state. Chuck stated that residents should see the sign wherever there is a boat ramp in the state. All boaters should be aware of the potential boat transfer of nuisance aquatic plants and animals from pond to pond. He requested hanging two at Spy Pond to help prevent the introduction of invasive species that grow on the water – one at the boat ramp and one at the parking lot where trailers are kept. Friends of Spy Pond did not have an objection to its location by boat ramp. Mr. Vitters had a couple of concerns – a comprehensive signage program for parks is underway and different signs are going to be needed based on the type of location (park, playground, playing field, water facility) and approved interpretive signs are being installed. Without knowing the complete picture of what's needed at Spy Pond, Mr. Vitters expressed concern that there will be too much signage. The Recreation Department shall work with the DPW to place the sign temporarily and will reassess once the other signs are defined. Will only place one sign at this time. The second sign for the parking area may be placed on other side of bridge by auto body shop where parking is allowed. Motion to allow signs to go up temporarily – Ms. Mayer, second – Ms. Campbell. Motion approved (5-0).

Robbins Farm Historical Signage

1. Presentation made by Tony Vogel on behalf of the Friends of Robbins Farm Park. Purpose is to get people into the history of the wonderful resource of Robbins Farm. Signs are to celebrate this donation of land to the children of Arlington. Interested in installing the sign on the existing kiosk. Mr. Vogel stated that the sign will be made of a material that is resistant to weather and vandalism. Friends of Robbins Farm are in full support and are willing to fund the signage.

Motion to approve sign, which is to be erected on existing kiosk - Ms. Mayer. Second - Ms. Campbell. Motion approved (5-0).

V. North Union Playground – Andrew Leonard

1. Not making changes to basketball court, due to funding constraints and community desire to focus on playground area at this time. Playground enlarged in two areas in order to provide safe distances between swings. Tot swing will be moved. New tire swing will be installed, as old one does not meet current code. Adding a piece of equipment (cable climber) and creating a separate sand play area. All safety zones in the plan currently work. Does not affect basketball area or playing field areas. Financials: site prep from Town is planned as a deduct alternate, if DPW is able to do this work. However, DPW is down two employees, so could not commit to excavating. To meet the approved budget, Leonard got quote for black poured-in-place safety surface, not colored surface, which community wants. In order to make it fit within budget, had to take new picnic table out of the project. Placed under potential add ins. If town is able to complete excavation, could reduce budget by \$6,000, but at this time, that is not finalized. Neighborhood group want 100% rubberized surface for safety reasons. If the climber was an add alternate, the rubber surface would be able to be colored. Mr. John Sanchez, Director of DPS, has stated that DPW will remove graffiti and try to fix dented equipment as a maintenance task. Members of the neighborhood group expressed concern that the neighborhood is expecting a new park and that a black surface will be hot.

2. The Commission discussed what add alternates should be included and recommended the following order: 1. Sand Box area, 2. Picnic Table, 3. Deduct alternate: if town can do the excavation. The Commission would like the base bid to include the rubberized color surface (tan, sand, or beige). Black is \$10/sq ft. (verified by 2 different companies) with color being an additional cost. The Commission discussed if other funds might be available to help alleviate the issue of insufficient funding for a color surface?

3. The project is expected to go out to bid the first week in July to ensure that it is completed this fall as promised to the community. Bid as an add alternate scheme because it gives flexibility at the time of signed contract (Leonard Associates recommendation). If it's put through as a complete bid, may need to rebid the entire project. In order to go out to bid, it will take several days. If we let Leonard know within two weeks whether there are funds to support the color, he would be fine with that. The easiest thing to subtract and add later would be the sand area as it does not affect the rubberized surface. Another option: is there another climbing experience that would be less expensive? This option had not been visited because that is what the neighborhood wanted.

4. Color play surface will remain in the base bid, if money becomes available. Mr. Leonard will check on McClennan surface, which has color. Ms. Maietta will obtain a set of specs of McClennan and will ask Planning Dept. for the contact information for Kyle Zick of Carol Johnson.

5. Motion to accept proposal (Mr. Vitters) 1) approve plan as designed contingent on \$3,000 available with add alternates of 1) sand box, 2) picnic table. (Ms. Mayer – Second). Motion approved (5-0).

IV. Reservoir Landscape - Cathy Garnett

1. Cathy Garnett presented a landscape plan. She is working with Conservation Commission, Reservoir Committee, and DPW to replace trees in reservoir area, required as part of the dam remediation project. Since 10 trees have disappeared in the beach area since 1980 and a couple of trees were lost in the construction of the play area, it was recommended that these areas be included in the plan. Trees will be planted in the parking lot to continue line of shade along street side for cars. Trees possibly used to fill in the tree line at the beach (Cathy checking on how Waldon Pond trees did planted in a sandy area). If tree warden recommends, may remove one dead tree before it becomes a hazard. The trees back by the benches near Lowell St. will be flowering trees and others 2 ½-3 caliper. Native species need to go into the natural Reservoir area outside of the beach, small saplings to larger more native looking trees. Lower, flowering trees along the street in the beach area, so as not to obstruct neighborhood view of the area. Total of 35-38 trees. Time frame: ConCom will review the total plan on Thursday. Put out to bid in time for fall planting. Plans available at beach in summer to get public feedback. Work will not begin until after beach closes. Go to bid and plant before November. Motion to move forward with plan to plant trees in beach and parking lot area – Ms. Mayer, second – Ms. Campbell. Motion approved (5-0).

VII. Rink Fees

1. Rink fees increase. Town went out for bid on gas fees. Increased health insurance costs and utilities have increased over the

last year or so. Mr. Caccavaro suggested that out-of-town user groups are assessed a larger fee and the youth groups can be assessed a lesser fee increase. Ms. Mayer suggested the inclusion of the Town's public high school program in any consideration of assessing a lesser fee increase. Ms. Curran, President of AHFSC, would like to know whether the management of the rink will be assessed accordingly this year. Ms. Maietta explained the staff breakdown and how salaries are broken down accordingly between rink and rec. Mr. Carabello stated that he has seen an improvement in staffing and rink procedures. The Commission noted the efforts towards rink staff training and professional development.

Ms. Curran informed the Commission that AHFSC have removed themselves from the Middlesex League and that the ice hours, once allocated to the Middlesex League hours should be shifted to the Hockey Club, so that the Hockey Club won't lose hours to Middlesex. Ms. Curran requested that the Commission implement a clear process for ice distribution. She stated that it appears the preference shifts from the youth to the high schools once the high school hockey season begins and that the preference should always be on the youth leagues first, regardless of the time of year. It was suggested that the role of the User Group Meeting at the beginning of the season is to hash out ice time between user groups.

2. Park Commissioners will meet in July to vote on fees. The Commissioners would like to see an analysis to increase high school user fees and youth hockey by \$10.00 and increase the out-of-town user groups by \$15.00.

VIII. Committee Updates:

1. Ms. Campbell (Field Users) –Meeting Wednesday at 7pm at the Sports Center. Signage and lighting policy to be discussed with all user groups in attendance.

2. Mr. Caccavaro (Sports Center Improvement Committee) – Mr. Caccavaro has not been advised that the committee membership would change. The Commissioners discussed if proportionate representation on the Committee is maintained and discussed that the role of the committee is to benefit all user groups in the community. The first meeting of the new season will be in September.

3. Capital Projects – Mr. Vitters will be in charge of Capital Projects until the new director is appointed. Mr. Vitters will be responsible for making the Commissioners and the public aware of public meetings and happenings, updates.

a. Spy Pond walkthrough on 23rd identified the need to replace and relocate plants. The water valve is not working and not available. DPW will be contacted and every effort will be made to quickly rectify this situation as well as Heimlich's work. DPW will cut grass and remove trash as needed, re-grade, etc. but cannot weed, prune, and water. The Commissioners inquired if the Friends group could water, weed, or prune. Another option discussed was possibly contracting out for these services and use money left over in project. Interpretive signs have not been ordered yet, but will coordinate with Recreation Director to get these ordered. Friends upset b/c of goose droppings and asked if DPW could remove droppings. A request was received from former resident Susan Lahaie now of Dover, Delaware, to have a plaque installed on an existing bench at Spy Pond Park in memory of her father. He was an Arlington resident who died from Alzheimer's disease and sat at a particular bench near the pond through his illness. Request needs to go to the public memorial committee and Mr. Carabello will contact Ms. Lahaie.

b. Waldo – Dave Fisher no longer with Larson & Associates. Still a fair number of things that need to be done on the punch list and will hold payment until such time as the list is done. Need to complete all signage for the parks. Mr. Carabello will call Mr. Paul Ryder, Cambridge Recreation, to discuss signage.

c. Menotomy survey is just coming in. Ms. Ellen Reed (member of FOMRP and Conservation Commission) offered to begin the NOI process for Menotomy, based on the proposal that Andrew Leonard has defined. Mr. Vitters suggested he sit down w/ FOMRP rep, Ms. Mayer and Mr. Leonard. There has been no neighborhood involvement on the Bishop project yet. Mr. Carabello reported that Mrs. Pine (an abutter) wants to be informed by Mr. Leonard when a neighborhood meeting occurs.

d. Buzzell – Recommend a meeting with Dave Warner of Larson & Associates to walk the field. Needs to submit a revised fee proposal to town before he can begin the project.

4. Leslie (FOCCA and Open Space) – meeting to revisit dog off leash areas throughout town held with Ms. Clarissa Rowe, Mr. Tom Quintal and Ms. Christine Connelly. Reviewed fenced and open areas, based on the Brookline Model. Group talked about the history of the Brookline Model, Arlington efforts and need to start dialogue and public education to move in the right direction. Meeting held with knowledge of TM and Selectmen Discussion to look at potential areas where off leash areas might be possible. Turkey Hill signs have been done and installed by the Land Stewards. Picture from the Advocate was shared with Commissioners.

Meeting adjourned 11:00 pm – Ms. Mayer, second – Mr. Carabello

